



Foggy Bottom News

February 2001

Published by the citizens of Foggy Bottom and the West End

Volume 43, No. 4

A Distressing Spectacle at the BZA:

Hearing on the GWU Plan Continued Until February 6

By Michael Thomas

On December 12, the Board of Zoning Adjustment held what was billed as a decision hearing on the pending GWU Foggy Bottom campus plan for 2000-2010. Because many critically important questions were raised by Carol Mitten, the Zoning Commissioner sitting by designation on this case, the hearing was continued until February 6. In the interim, the university, the Office of Planning and other parties were to submit additional information responsive to the questions raised.

The Chair, Sheila Cross Reid, was hostile to any effort by Commissioner Mitten to subject the university's positions to critical scrutiny. She repeatedly lectured Ms. Mitten to the effect that questions should have been raised earlier, or that the Board should not question GWU's motives or try to manage their affairs. The Vice-Chair, Robert Sockwell, showed a similar willingness to accept the position of GWU on nearly every issue as either adequate or inevitable. Some examples of these disturbing exchanges follow.

Boundaries and Use Zones

Ms. Mitten pointed out that, contrary to the general principles set out in every plan since 1970, GWU proposed to put core university uses not in the center of the campus, but at the periphery or even outside the authorized boundaries. That meant impacts on adjoining areas. She wanted to discuss the policies behind the boundaries, and those behind any "housing opportunity area," before deciding what adjustments needed to be made to the proposals by GWU. Ms. Reid's responses: such issues should have been raised at earlier hearings; she considered the boundaries already "established"; and the Board should just accept or reject the proposals of GWU, and not "chip away" at them. Mr. Sockwell suggested that the developments south of the campus, including moving the Elliott School there, might mean they should *enlarge* the campus boundaries, but he would just wait and see what problems were caused.

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Update

It's Finally Open Again!

The Department of Public Works just before Christmas surprised Foggy Bottom residents by its unexpected but overdue opening of the bridge at 24th & K Streets. The

bridge has been closed for many months and was due to open in August; construction was delayed, according to workmen, by Federal Highway Administration restrictions.

While the bridge is open to traffic, there is rough pavement

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Readers: This slim version of the News is due to illness, just when the paper was to be laid out (bad timing!). The traditional version will return next month.

Williams: Campus Expansion is "City-Wide Concern"

At the December 4 FBA meeting, Mayor Anthony A. Williams told the overflow crowd that "the current theme I've heard all over the city is the expansion of our non-profit institutions, and particularly our universities, at the expense of our neighborhoods."

The mayor, in his first appearance at an FBA meeting since his election, outlined the "terrific flexibility" universities have under the current regulations, calling them inadequate and insufficient to protect our neighborhoods. That flexibility, according to the mayor, allows "high student concentrations to live in neighborhoods; land and neighborhoods to be bought and converted for university use . . . [and] de facto campuses."

The D.C. Office of Planning (OP) was asked by the mayor to "work proactively on this issue," and Planning Director Andrew Altman and his staff were praised by Williams and by FBA President Michael Thomas for their "strong and sustained effort . . . to address finally and adequately the planning issues related to university campuses." Thomas cited the long hours of discussion and negotiations by OP, GWU, FBA and ANC-2A on the campus plan, and the progress he be-

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D.C. History and Heritage Featured at January FBA Meeting

At the January 29 FBA meeting, the history and heritage of D.C. will be discussed by two speakers well versed in both subjects. The meeting is scheduled for the Melrose Hotel, 2430 Pennsylvania Avenue at 7:30 p.m.

Barbara Franco, Director of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., will reveal the plans for the City Museum of Washington, D.C. The HSWDC was chosen by a partnership of Congress and the city to develop and implement plans for a museum dedicated to our city. The D.C. government turned over to the project the Carnegie Library building at Mount Vernon Square for conversion to the museum, to be opened in 2003. Franco, a graduate of Bryn Mawr and the Cooperstown Program in Museum Studies, has headed since 1996 the Historical Society, which is housed in the Heurich Mansion on New Hampshire Avenue.

FBA is again pleased to welcome **Kathryn Schneider Smith**, local social and urban historian, who will discuss various projects being undertaken by the D.C. Heritage Tourism Coalition. The Coalition works with local groups to bring visitors into D.C. neighborhoods and show them that interesting and charming areas exist in D.C. "beyond the Mall." Smith earlier addressed the Foggy Bottom Association during the FBA's 40th Anniversary celebration.

Earlier in January, the National Capital Planning Commission issued its "short list" for location of future memorials and museums. It includes several in our area, such as the E St. expressway interchange on the east side of the Kennedy Center, the triangular park at 25th & Pennsylvania, Rock Creek Park at the end of Virginia Ave. and between M St. and Pennsylvania Ave.

FOGGY BOTTOM ASSOCIATION MEETING

All Residents Welcome

Guest Speakers:

Barbara Franco

Director, Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

and

Kathryn Schneider Smith

Chair, D.C. Heritage Tourism Coalition

Monday, January 29, 2001

The Melrose Hotel

2430 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

7:30 p.m.

(Next meeting: February 26, 2001)

Fr. McCaffrey Joins St. Stephen's

By Marion Maskin

It is a joy to welcome to St. Stephen's Father Patrick J. McCaffrey, who has joined the Pastoral Staff as a Senior Priest. A native of Brooklyn, New York, Father McCaffrey was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington in 1959. After ordination, he served as an associate pastor at St. Gabriel's, St. Mary, Mother of God's, and St. Anthony's in Washington, and St. Bartholomew's and Christ the King in suburban Maryland. Before his recent assignment, Father McCaffrey was pastor of St. Francis de Sales and St. Gabriel parishes.

He also served over the years as chaplain of the Newman Center at D.C. Teachers College, and as a member of the faculty of the former Cathedral Latin School. He also spent a year in Hispanic studies in Santo Domingo. The staff and parishioners hope he will quickly feel at home.

Marian Wood

A great lady named M. Marian McGill Wood, longtime resident of the Potomac Plaza cooperative, died November 22 at her home. She was 93.

Mrs. Wood, who was trained as a nurse and educator, worked for many years for the Veterans Administration in hospital training programs, and retired in the late 1960s. In 1941, she was one of a group of 16 nurses traveling to England to help establish an American-backed hospital staffed with U.S. volunteer personnel. The ship, the SS Maasdam, was torpedoed and they were rescued from lifeboats by another vessel. Upon arrival three weeks later in England, they were honored by the Queen of England and Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Mrs. Wood authored a long article describing the incident.

She was married to retired Merchant Marine Captain Irby Wood who died in 1991. After her retirement she traveled widely and published stories about the places she visited. She was active in Foggy Bottom groups, especially as a frequent visitor to and supporter of St. Mary's Court.

BZA, from page 1

Traffic and Parking

Ms. Mitten pointed out that Condition Number 13 of the approval of the 1985 plan required a Traffic Management Plan tracking DPW recommendations, and that the current GWU proposal repeats many of those provisions as though they had never been implemented over the 15 years of the plan. She reminded the Chair that she had asked for a report from the Zoning Administrator as to GWU's compliance with the conditions on the 1985 plan, and had been told that such inquiries are the BZA's responsibility. "We are duty-bound to determine whether they are in compliance," Ms. Mitten said, and the penalty for non-compliance was no further processing of zoning applications. She also questioned whether a proposed 3.4% increase in parking spaces was adequate to deal with a possible 16% increase in faculty and 32% increase in staff, given that 45% of staff and faculty drive to work. Ms. Reid said that the applicant could not address the *adequacy* of parking, and that all the Board could ask was its best efforts.

Enrollment and Student Housing

Ms. Mitten noted that there were two feasible approaches, a soft cap on enrollment that would vary with any of several student housing provisions, or a hard cap on full-time undergraduates. Both she and BZA Member Anne Renshaw stated that an enrollment increase of some 3,000 students, as would be allowed under the GWU proposal, could create acute impacts on the community. Ms. Reid resisted any change to the proposed 20,000-student cap, both because that is what had been allowed in the 1985 plan and because of unidentified concerns about GWU's "funding" or "accreditation."

In discussing the university's proposals for new on-campus housing, it became clear that Ms. Reid did not understand GWU's student housing proposals, which were conditioned on their being successful in (1) promptly getting title to some properties, (2) PUD approvals on two major properties, and (3) other concessions. She asked for "clarification" by GWU of proposals which had already been the subject of extensive presentations, cross-examinations, and rebuttals. Mr. Sockwell did note that including areas outside the campus in any housing opportunity area could increase the need for on-campus parking. Ms. Reid countered that she did not want to "micromanage" the university.

Ms. Mitten had also discovered that several properties on campus now designated for housing, including at least two current residence halls, were proposed for academic or administrative uses. GWU had proposed adding new housing on campus if they received certain concessions, but had not discussed the effect of displacing current housing.

Squares 54 and 39

Ms. Mitten opposed allowing commercial, non-university use of Square 54, the old hospital site. She also questioned whether Square 39, the property west and north of the new hospital, should not be for residential/campus life uses, consistent with the policy of having such uses on the periphery of the campus. Ms. Reid said she didn't know what connection GWU intended between the hospital and Square 39, and more generally was "completely at a loss to understand" the "total basis" of what GWU was proposing for the ten-year period. Therefore, she was "very cautious" about changing anything. Mr. Sockwell went so far as to argue that Square 39 was too "remote" for student housing, and that comparisons with the Hall on Virginia Avenue were irrelevant precisely because HOVA is off-campus.

There will be additional submissions by GWU, and an opportunity for others to respond before the continued hearing on February 6. However, unless members of the panel, other than Ms. Mitten and Ms. Renshaw, significantly enhance their understanding of the issues and change their attitudes on basic questions, the community will have to look to the Zoning Commission to review and reverse yet another badly flawed BZA decision.

The next hearing is scheduled, as noted above, for Tuesday, February 6, in Room 220, 441 Fourth Street, N.W. (Judiciary Square Metro). These meetings usually are set for 9:30 a.m. but

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To place ads, Call Olga Corey at 337-3196. Cost for classified ads is 60 cents per word; a 2-inch high by 2-column wide ad—the smallest available, is \$38.50.

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are often delayed. The Office of Zoning has indicated that no other matters are currently scheduled for the BZA that day.

GWU Submission: Overreaching Again

GWU submitted responses to the BZA's requests on January 12. Much of what was submitted, unsurprisingly, duplicated materials already in the record. However, several statements again demonstrated GWU's propensity to overreach and to confuse with new and ambiguous proposals.

An example of overreaching is GWU's response to the board's inquiry about the Traffic Management Plan (TMP) required by the 1985 campus plan. GWU stated that it had implemented each of a myriad of programs, and as proof that it was in compliance with TMP cited a letter from the Zoning Administrator dated December 7, 2000. In that letter, Michael Johnson was responding to protests about GWU's proposed use of land off campus at 1957 E Street. His letter had nothing to do with properties within the campus, or with the TMP. Further, when Commissioner Mitten had earlier asked that the Zoning Administrator report to the BZA as to whether GWU was in compliance with the 1985 campus plan before ruling on the proposed plan, she was told by Chair Reid that such determinations were for the BZA, not the Zoning Administrator.

An example of new and confusing proposals after the hearing had closed is GWU's response to the board's inquiry about Square 54. Ms. Reid had not understood that GWU had explicitly conditioned their proposal to add 500 student beds on Square 54 (the old hospital) on being granted an extremely favorable PUD by the Zoning Commission involving 900,000 square feet of commercial office space. In their January 12 response, GWU for the first time said that if they were not granted the PUD they would come back to the Commission to address again how they might provide 500 beds. Note that there is no promise to provide the beds, just to reopen negotiations. However, based on the record to date, that may be treated by the board, or at least Ms. Reid, as being the equivalent of promising 500 beds.

FBA and other opponents have until January 25 to rebut the GWU submissions.

Office of Planning Strongly Opposes GWU Plan

The Office of Planning also submitted its response to a question from the BZA. The chair had asked for clarification of the amount acquired by GWU outside the campus but within Foggy Bottom in the period 1900-2000. OP submitted three charts, including a bar graph showing the percentage of land acquired in each of six squares in the decade, and one, a bar graph showing both the incremental and cumulative ownership

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of land by decade over the past 80 years. In addition, because those charts did not "represent the entirety of the impact the University has had, and will continue to have, on the surrounding neighborhood," OP enclosed a copy of the map FBA had filed with its testimony. That map was color-coded to show both properties owned by GWU in Foggy Bottom and West End, and buildings, as OP described them, "having a significant student population that represent *de facto* dormitories."

The conclusion of the OP letter to the BZA was as follows:

"Eventually, University acquisitions in Foggy Bottom will end, not because GWU no longer wishes to expand, but because it will have acquired all the available property in the area. Nothing in GWU's current submissions would protect against this result, and that is why OP opposes approval of the campus plan."

Mayor, from page 1-

lieves was made possible by the Williams administration.

Mayor Williams also reported on his efforts to bring "transparency and accountability to the government," so it can be judged by citizens "essentially as my bosses as to whether I am getting the job done or not." He touched on subjects familiar to D.C. residents: D.C. General Hospital; needed management changes; the road situation and other infrastructure problems; rebuilding our waterfronts; a residential downtown; trees; and technology including "building a new harbor and it's an internet harbor."

According to the Georgetown Current, the mayor, when he addressed the Dupont Circle Citizens Association meeting in January, indicated he will hire "a top-level aide...to study the way the city reviews land-use issues with an eye to possible regulatory changes or agency realignment." One of the official's duties, according to Deputy Mayor Eric Price, will be to look at the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and other agencies. The DCRA is responsible for issuing building and demolition permits and directing environmental reviews, and has been the constant target of citizen complaints. At the FBA meeting, the first question asked of the mayor was a request to make DCRA more responsible.

Following are excerpts from a transcript of the mayor's remarks concerning land use, zoning and the GW campus plan:

"Planning and GW: In the thousands of public meetings that I've attended since I've been mayor—about 4,000 or 5,000 now—the current theme I've heard all over the city is the expansion of our non-profit institutions, and particularly our universities, at the expense of our neighborhoods. If I talk with people in Foggy Bottom

and West End I hear about it; if I talk with people in Brookland I hear about it over there, if I talk to people in Palisades I hear about it over there; if I talk with people in Georgetown I hear about it over there.

"This is a city-wide concern and it's not just a parochial NIMBY interest of any one neighborhood. We've heard these concerns for over a year, and I've asked Andrew Altman and the Office of Planning to work proactively on this issue, not only work with great care and caution on our four campus plans given the regulations we have already, but to also take action on a broader policy issue.

"What Andrew has informed me is that for some time, under current D.C. regulations, universities have terrific flexibility which has allowed: (1) high concentrations of students to live in neighborhoods; (2) land and neighborhoods to be bought and converted for university use and in the end neighborhoods are converted to de facto campuses. And what this tells me is that the current campus plan regulations are inadequate and do not sufficiently protect our neighborhoods.

"I'm not trying to grandstand; I just think this is the right thing to do from a planning point of view. It's time to rebalance the scales and require our major institutions to think about neighborhoods first as they think about their expansion plans second. . . . So for this reason I've asked Andrew and the Office of Planning to revise the campus plan regulations so that they have real traction and they have real teeth.

"Revised regulations are going to request that, Number 1: the Zoning Commission rather than the BZA hear campus plans, because this is important given the breadth of their mandate in viewing development projects comprehensively, because essentially there

are many plans. The Zoning Commission is responsible for the big plans; they ought to be responsible for the baby plans (to use "technical" terms). Number 2: Development ought to be confined within the campus plan boundaries, and there should not be as-of-right dormitory development in residentially-zoned areas.

"Number 3: Student enrollment ought to be linked — and when I've talked with my colleagues in other cities this is already happening—that student enrollment ought to be linked to housing and parking requirements, and universities have to be more responsible for their students. . . .

"Finally, colleges and universities ought to provide a yearly status report of key goals to citizens, so citizens have an understanding of what the goals and ambitions of the university are, how they fit into the campus plan, and what the possible neighborhood impacts are going to be.

"Now, clearly, I recognize the impact of all this in this neighborhood. . . . We've decided that we're not going to wait. . . . We're going to try to forge some kind of agreement with George Washington now. So, to get to the point, you're well aware that George Washington is seeking a new campus plan for the period of 2000 to 2010. I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that we have spent thousands of hours with community representatives and George Washington to reach an agreement that ensures no new impacts to the Foggy Bottom area.

"And to ensure this we have had a number of key meetings with President Trachtenberg. And before I forget, there's another part of this, too, and I think Andrew knows this. We'd also like to encourage our major institutions to actually help us leverage development in our city, by getting them to do more development east of 16th Street and east of the river, because this all goes together. Some are more interested in that than others.

"Now we haven't yet reached an agreement with George Washington that with certainty demonstrates how nearby neighborhoods are going to be protected. We recommended to the Board of Zoning Adjustment that George Washington be required to provide one bed for every additional student, as well as limit

where GW would build its dorms. This would ensure that university expansion not continue to be at the expense of the neighborhood. The BZA is going to be making decisions, and I would hope . . . that the BZA will take into account the interests of the neighborhood and make some key decisions that are going to determine what happens in George Washington and what happens in this community over the next ten years. I'd like to think, and maybe I'm myopic or Pollyannish about this, but I'd like to think that we could have a healthy, thriving West End and Foggy Bottom, and we could also have a healthy, thriving George Washington, and the two are not mutually exclusive.

"We've kind of come in between a rock and a hard place right now because we thought we had an agreement, but it would still call for more expansion that I don't think any of you would buy into, not just the more vocal advocates but the regular folks. So we're where we are."

Update, from page 1

just to the north and south of K Street. However, the eastbound (south) service road is almost complete, with just a few remaining feet of the south lane still closed. A supervisor advised the News it will probably be finished in February or March. There appears to be more work to be done on the westbound section.

FB resident Olga Corey reported that during the Christmas holidays, when traffic was light, she traveled back and forth across the bridge several times just for the novelty. After so many months of closure, our feet and cars are probably having a hard time making the trip down 24th once again.

New ANC-2A Meets; Elects Officers

The newly elected and re-elected members of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A met for the first time January 17 to choose officers and begin deliberations. The new chair is **Elizabeth Elliott**, the vice-chair is **Dorothy Miller**, the secretary is **James Patterson**, and **Jeff Marootian** will serve as treasurer.

The full roster of the Commission is as follows: Elizabeth Elliott was elected to represent Single Member District 2A01, Richard Price for 2A02, Maria Tyler for 2A03, James

Patterson for 2A04, Dorothy Miller for 2A05, and Jeff Marootian for 2A06.

(The FBNews omitted these election results in the December issue; this error must have resulted from an interruption or some other mishap just after the Council and School Board results were written up. It was far from intentional that these important results were missing.)

Residents Enjoy Ritz-Carlton Tour

The special FBA tour of the Ritz-Carlton complex on December 9 brought a full complement of Foggy Bottom residents to hear about and examine the complex's new hotel and not-yet-completed residence building.

The group gathered in one of the hotel's meeting rooms where refreshments were available. (The early birds were treated to gingerbread men!) Welcoming remarks and information about the project were covered by James McBride, General Manager of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, and Anthony Lanier, President of EastBanc and developer & builder of the project. After their remarks and a barrage of questions from the group, FBA President Michael Thomas thanked them on behalf of the Foggy Bottom Association and the VIPs in the room, "Very Inquisitive Persons."

The welcome session was followed by an exhaustive tour of the hotel, its meeting rooms, dining rooms, several guest rooms, and the sports club. The group then walked around to the residences side, and saw three different-sized apartments which, while still under construction, showed the layouts and amenities being made available at the residences.

DPW Installs New Parking Signs

In early January the D.C. Department of Public Works installed new parking signs in our neighborhood, replacing signed faded and missing for a number of years. For example, two signs and poles at 26th and Eye Streets on either side of the alley have been replaced, warning parkers to stay the required distance from the alley opening.

One of the installers indicated that there is a minimum of personnel assigned to this task, but that it was finally the time to work in this area.

Foggy Bottom Folks

Caroline Isabel Corcoran is certainly the smallest and least senior resident at Watergate West. Born at Sibley Hospital on May 5, she was brought home by **Mary** and **Tom Corcoran**, who are very proud to be her adoptive parents. They have resided at the Watergate since 1991.

Another petite neighbor, **Caitlin Quinn Buckley**, resides on 25th Street, after arriving in March at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring. Her proud parents are **Marianne** and **Michael Quinn Buckley**, who have been condo owners here since January 1999.

Wedding bells have rung for the second time in the past year at the York Apartments on 20th Street. Two tenants, who had been fellow law students at GWU for several years, exchanged wedding vows in Hawaii in August. The bride, who hails from Hawaii, graduated this past May and the groom, who is from Florida, in 1999; both have positions at local law firms. Congratulations and many wishes for happiness to **Julie** and **Carlos Russo**!

The York Apartments (where about 85% of the tenants are students) regret the "loss" of three of their long-time residents. **Joe Breed** moved out October 24 to assume a position in the computer field in Tokyo for a German bank. The apartment of **Marge Cooper**, a retired geologist at the Department of Interior, was vacated in June, as she had taken up residence in a nursing home in the Bayville, N.Y. area. Her contribution as both a dedicated director and president of the York Apartments Tenants' Association, her handling a condominium conversion attempt (1979-1983) and in mediating tenant disputes with former landlords for several years after that, were invaluable and greatly appreciated.

Margaret McMurtrie left for an emergency hospital stay in June and in August moved to the pleasing environment of "Ingleside," a retirement/assisted-living institution of the Presbyterian Church on Military Road, N.W. She had the singular achievement of having been the longest-residing York tenant—she had lived there in the same apartment

since 1952! She remembers seeing, from her window on the 8th floor, children playing at the St. John's orphanage on the opposite corner at 20th & F Sts. (It was converted into the headquarters of the National Association of Life Underwriters after 1955, and in April 1999 was purchased by GWU.) Margaret, who had "migrated" from Australia in 1948, worked for the Embassy of India for many years, and began her association with the United States as a civilian employee of the U.S. Air Force during World War II in Australia and then in Guam after the war. Thanks to her niece and a fellow resident, Hilda Scudder, Margaret's affects were resettled in her new home.

The Kennedy Center ties a red, red ribbon around itself for the holidays, an impressive undertaking. According to **Mike Hackshaw**, FBA's source for all info on the Ken Cen, that ribbon is 10 feet wide, is tied 75 feet from the ground, and is 2000 feet long.

At an early December event, D.C. malpractice attorney **Jack Olender** hosted his annual awards ceremony at the Kennedy Center. Recipients this year included Jerry Lewis (Generous Heart) and Buzz Aldrin (America's Role Model). The Olender Foundation also gave awards, scholarships and grants to Howard and University of the District of Columbia law students and various other organizations. Olender and his wife Lovell live in the Watergate complex.

St. Mary's Court had a double treat at Christmas this year, with their regular Christmas party on December 15, and another one sponsored by **Doubletree Guest Suites** on December 13. In the past Doubletree and its predecessor Guest Quarters held a holiday party for a large group of Foggy Bottom residents just before Thanksgiving, and the hotel decided to move the festivities to St. Mary's. Then, just two days later, Councilmember Jack Evans again visited the Court for his annual stint as the jovial, white-bearded Yuletide gift giver. Incidentally, we heard that the Doubletree Santa was to arrive by a large red vehicle from Fire Station 23 on G Street, but our hope for a photo of that event was not realized. The hotel employees turned out in Santa outfits and enjoyed posing with residents of the Court.

The Foggy Bottom Diner

By Jim Patterson

TGI Friday's

The new menu at TGI Friday's, located at the corner of 21st and I Streets, has something for everybody. There are plenty of beef, chicken and seafood entrees so that one can order from the menu for weeks without having the same entree twice. The wait staff is attentive to special orders, such as how steaks are to be prepared or substitutions such as baked potato instead of fries. Lunch for one, which includes entree, soup or salad, and non-alcoholic beverage costs around \$20.

Service is somewhat inconsistent. For example, one day I ordered soup, which was delivered promptly. However, I had to wait 15 minutes for a spoon. My entree was delivered and I reminded the waiter that I still needed a spoon for the soup. On another visit, the waitress was very prompt, and her service was excellent! However, after she bused my table, it took her about 20 minutes to deliver my check! Good thing I had a newspaper to read. But on many occasions the service and the food have been very good.

Specialty drinks almost constitute an entire menu of their own. I recently tried the "Ultimate" Bloody Mary, which is served in an over-sized stem glass. These drinks are around \$8, but in my case, the size of my "Ultimate" Bloody Mary likely equalled five regular ones. So be prepared to drink if you order an "Ultimate."

One may also opt to join Friday's Gold Points program, where one gets a plastic card and "points" are awarded every time one dines. Accumulated "points" can be used to get free appetizers or desserts.

In short, TGI Friday's is definitely worth a visit for lunch or dinner. But keep your waiter on a strict schedule so you don't waste any time during or after your meal. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being argh! and 5 being excellent, I'd rate Friday's a 4.

Jim Patterson can be reached at 113232.3456@Compuserve.com.

Ed. Note: And you might find discount coupons for TGI Fridays in the Sunday Post. The January 14 issue carried coupons for \$5 off on a \$20 purchase.

Neighborhood Datebook

Monday, January 29: Foggy Bottom Association meeting, featuring two speakers on D.C.'s history and heritage. Kathryn Schneider Smith, local historian, will discuss the D.C. Heritage Tourism Coalition, and Barbara Franco, Director of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., will outline plans for the proposed D.C. Museum. The Melrose Hotel, 2430 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 31: "Through the Looking Glass: An Evening with the Artists," gallery talks by painter Peter Waddell, mixed-media specialist Richard Dana, and installation artist Annette Polan, in connection with a special Octagon bicentennial exhibition which runs through June 3. The Octagon, 1799 New York Avenue, N.W. \$10 Octagon members; \$15 non-members; light reception follows presentations. 6:45 p.m.

Friday, February 2: Opening of exhibitions of artists Robert Tomlin and Barbara Johnson. Tomlin's works include photorealistic and figurative paintings and drawings, and Johnson's are organic oil on wood abstractions. Arts Club of Washington, 2017 I Street, N.W. Tuesday-Friday, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Opening reception, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 4: Fouzi El-Asmar, a Palestinian, will read his poetry and share his experiences in the lounge of The United Church, 1920 G Street, N.W. For info call 331-1495. 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 6: Board of Zoning Adjustment hearing on the GWU Campus Plan. Room 220, 441 Fourth Street, N.W. (Judiciary Square Metro), 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, February 8: "Is It Osteoarthritis or Osteoporosis?" Learn about signs and symptoms, as well as current treatments. Louis Levitt, M.D., Orthopedic Surgeon. GWU Hospital Auditorium, 901 23rd Street, N.W. 2:00-4:00 p.m.*

Friday, February 9: Presentation by Perry Smith, FBI Senior Advisor, at TGIF brown-bag discussion series on workplace faith and ethics. Grace Episcopal Church, 1041 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W. 12:30-1:30 p.m.**

Monday, February 12: Classes begin at Guy Mason Recreation Center in subjects such as yoga, QI Gong, aerobics, arts and crafts, and languages. Courses in tumbling and dance are available for children, and the Center hosts a Retirees Club. For info and to register call 282-2180. The Center is on Calvert Street just east of Wisconsin Avenue (on the Friendship Heights bus line.)

Wednesday, February 14: "New Treatment for Enlarged Prostates," presented by Michael J. Manyak, M.D., Chair, Department of Urology. GWU Hospital Auditorium, 901 23rd Street, N.W. 7:00 p.m.*

Friday, February 16: Presentation by Marc Fisher, Washington Post Metro Section columnist on "daily life, politics, culture and the Washington area." TGIF brown-bag discussion series on workplace faith and ethics. Grace Episcopal Church, 1041 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W. 12:30-1:30 p.m.**

Through Monday, February 19: "Choreography," an exhibit of oils, watercolors and pencils by Anthony S. Elacion. Watergate Gallery, 2552 Virginia Avenue, N.W. For info call 338-4488.

Wednesday, February 21: Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A monthly meeting. For location call 736-1775. 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 21: "The Eyes of Seniors," focusing on aging's effect on eyes and vision, by Barrett Katz, M.D., Chair, Department of Ophthalmology. GWU Hospital Auditorium, 901 23rd Street, N.W. 7:00 p.m.*

Friday, February 23: Rev. Leslie Reimer, first chaplain to provide pastoral care to transplant patients, will discuss medical counseling at the TGIF brown-bag session, Grace Episcopal Church, 1041 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W. 12:30-1:30 p.m.**

Sunday, February 25: "Ethical Issues in Human Stem Cell Research," a lecture by Ida Chow, Ph.D., Society for Developmental Biology in Bethesda, Md. The United Church, 1920 G Street, N.W. For info call 331-1495. 3:00 p.m.

*For info and to register, call 1-888-449-3627.

**For info call 333-7100.